

of load that draws current from the alternator. Alternatively, load 322 may be provided by turning on electrical accessories of the vehicle, such as headlights, rear window defroster, or the like. As another alternative, the test may be conducted without externally coupling a load to the alternator if the battery draws large current from the alternator. A cooling fan 326, controlled by microcontroller 302, may be provided to help dissipate heat generated by load 322. Reference is herein made to copending application serial number 09/888,382, by the same inventors filed concurrently herewith, titled ALTERNATOR TESTING METHOD AND SYSTEM USING TIMED APPLICATION OF LOAD, and commonly assigned, for description of these components.